

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A device for detecting a fingerprint of a fingertip placed on a contact surface of a fingerprint input section, comprising:

a moving element for moving the contact surface when the fingertip is placed on the contact surface;

a lock mechanism for fixing said contact surface when said contact surface is moved to predetermined position; and

a detecting unit for detecting the fingerprint when said contact surface is fixed by said lock mechanism to said predetermined position.

2. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein:

said lock mechanism comprises a switch for producing a signal when said contact surface is fixed to said lock mechanism; and

said detecting unit is energized to detect the fingerprint when said detecting unit receives said signal from said switch.

3. A device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said moving element comprises an energizing member which withstands movement of said contact surface to make a pressure imposed onto said contact surface substantially uniform until said contact surface is fixed to said predetermined position.

4. A device as claimed in claim 2, wherein said moving element comprises an energizing member which withstands movement of said contact surface to make a pressure imposed onto said contact surface substantially uniform until said contact surface is fixed to said predetermined position.

5. A device as claimed in claim 1, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

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means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

6. A device as claimed in claim 2, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

7. A device as claimed in claim 3, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

8. A device as claimed in claim <sup>20</sup>1, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

9. A device as claimed in claim <sup>20</sup>1, wherein said detecting unit comprises a solid-state image sensor for scanning a fingerprint image into a sequence of data signals.

10. A device as claimed in claim <sup>20</sup>1, wherein said detecting unit comprises:

a converting circuit to convert a variable pressure from the fingertip into a variable electric resistance; and

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a measuring circuit to measure said variable electric resistance.

X 11. A device for detecting a fingerprint as claimed in claim <sup>20</sup>~~1~~, wherein said detecting unit comprises:

a converting circuit to convert a variable pressure from the fingertip into a variable capacitance;

a measuring circuit to measure said variable capacitance.

X 12. An electric apparatus which executes a predetermined operation and which includes the device claimed in claim 8, wherein said electric apparatus is powered when the fingerprint data signal sequence of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is stored in said memory.

13. An electric apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein the device is operable as a power switch.

14. An electric apparatus which executes a predetermined operation and which includes the device claimed in claim 8, wherein said electric apparatus is powered when the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is coincident with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

15. An electric apparatus as claimed in claim <sup>14</sup>~~13~~, wherein the device is operable as a power switch.

16. A doorkeeper apparatus which controls a door lock mechanism and which includes the device claimed in claim 8, wherein said doorkeeper apparatus opens a door when the fingerprint data signal sequence of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is stored in said memory.

17. A doorkeeper apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein the device is operable as a doorbell switch.

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18. A doorkeeper apparatus which controls a door lock mechanism and which includes the device claimed in claim 8, wherein said doorkeeper apparatus opens a door when the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is coincident with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

19. A doorkeeper apparatus as claimed in claim 18, wherein the device is operable as a doorbell switch.

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